(d) The New National Mineral Policy was announced in March, 2008. Consequential amendments in the Mines and Minerals (Development and Regulation) Act, 1957 and the Rules framed thereunder have not been carried out yet and as such the impact of the new Mineral Policy on the rise in the mineral concession approvals cannot be assessed.

(e) The Government is committed to taking all necessary steps to encourage mineral exploration and mining activities in accordance with the National Mineral Policy, 2008.

Regional scale survey by GSI

1721. SHRI PRASANTA CHATTERJEE: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Geological Survey of India (GSI) has conducted regional scale survey for mineral resources during 2006-07 to 2008-09; and

(b) if so, what are their findings in West Bengal?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Geological Survey of India (GSI) has conducted regional survey using Geological, Geophysical and Geochemtical methods in search for mineral resources of the country. GSI has carried out investigations for minerals like coal, iron ore, gold, basemetal and phosphorite in the State of West Bengal. The details of findings of the investigations carried out during Field Seasons 2006-07 to 2008-09 (upto March'09) are as below:

Coal:

(i) In Nabasan block, Raniganj coal field, eleven coal seams have been recorded. Thickness of coal seams varies from 0.40m to 8.35m between the depth 230.80m and 687.70m. Investigation is completed.

(ii) In Kapasdanga-Bharkata sector, Birbhum coal field, four regional coal seam zones (cumulative thickness varying from 17.35m to 86.00m) have been recorded at depth between 300m and 720m. Investigation is completed.

(iii) In Mahallah area, Birvbhum coal field two lignite seams (cumulative thickness 5.50m) have been recorded within Tertiary sediments between 174m and 185m depths. Investigation is under progress.

(iv) In Binodpur-Bhabaniganj block, Raniganj coal field four coal seams with thickness ranging from 0.50m to 10.75m have been recorded between 336.45m and 489.27m depths. Investigation is under progress.

(v) In Makdumnagar area, Birbhum coal field, three regional coal seams with cumulative thickness 68.80m has been recorded below 293m depth. Investigation is under progress.

Gold:

(i) Preliminary investigation for gold has been carried out at Rudra area, Bankura district. Analytical result of soil samples yielded gold values ranging from 31ppb to 0.26 g/t.

(ii) Prospecting for gold in and around Tilakanali and Kelipathar, Bankura district indicated that results of samples received so far from Tilakanali area is not encouraging. Investigation is under progress.

Base Metal:

Investigation for basemetal in Tamakhun-Thakurdungri area, Purulia district is being carried out by large scale mapping, pitting-trenching and sampling.

Iron Ore:

Geophysical Survey for iron ore (magnetite) in Saltora-Mejia block, Bankura district was carried out along 41 traverses. The result is not encouraging except the delineation of a magnetic zone near Niyamatpur. Investigation is completed.

Phosphorite:

Investigation of Apatite (Calcium Phosphate) and associated minerals in Cholwari and adjoining areas of Purulia district is being carried out by mapping, pitting-trenching, drilling and sampling.

In addition to the above, Geochemical Mapping under the National Geochemical Mapping (NGCM) programme is being carried out in Purulia district, West Bengal. Preparation of anomaly maps of different elements are in progress along with the mapping programme for identifying the positive areas for mineral investigation. Similarly geophysical mapping employing regional gravity and magnetic methods are also being conducted in parts of Purulia district to identify subsurface mineralization.

Naxal attack at NALCO

†1722. SHRI RUDRA NARAYAN PANY: Will the Minister of MINES be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the recent naxalite attack on National Aluminium Company (NALCO), a navratna company;

(b) if so, the details thereof, and

(c) whether Government is contemplating any measures to avert the recurrence of such incidents?

THE MINISTER OF MINES (SHRI B.K. HANDIQUE): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. The mines of National Aluminium Company Limited (NALCO) located at Damanjodi in district Koraput of Orissa were attacked by a large number of naxalites at about 9.30 PM on 12th April, 2009, apparently with the intention to loot weapons or explosives stored in the Explosive Magazine House. As a result of the determined action by the Central Industrial Security Force(CISF) personnel deployed at the site, the naxatites were pushed back by the morning of 13th April, 2009. However, there were 10(ten) casualties of CISF personnel and some casualties among the naxalites during the night long operation.

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.